Team Building Activity: Generating Ideas Warm-Up

Objective:
Students stretch their imaginations by looking at a variety of everyday objects and listing possible new uses for the objects. This idea-generation activity focuses on key components of communication, problem solving, and thinking outside of the box—setting the stage for students to work together and manage their own projects.

Time:
15 – 30 Minutes

Materials:
Bring in one everyday object for each group. Examples may include: cheese grater, stapler, napkin ring, umbrella, potato peeler, and hand-held pencil sharpener

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Post the following “SCAMPER” questions for groups to see. Point out that SCAMPER is an acronym that helps to remember different ways to think up new improvements.

   a. **Substitute:** What materials could be used to improve this product? Can you use this product in a different way?

   b. **Combine:** How could the product be combined with something else to create something new?

   c. **Adapt:** How can the product be adapted to fit another purpose?

   d. **Modify:** How could you change the shape, look, or feel of the product?

   e. **Put to Another Use:** Can you put this produce to another use?

   f. **Eliminate:** How could you simplify this product? What features or parts could you remove?

   g. **Reverse:** What could be turned around, placed in an opposite direction, or used backwards?
INSTRUCTIONS (Continued):

2. Distribute one of the everyday objects to each group and have them respond to the SCAMPER questions. (Stress that there are no right answers.) Explain that each group will have five minutes to respond to the SCAMPER questions and then they should pass their object to another group and apply the SCAMPER questions to their next object.

3. Debrief with the following discussion questions:
   
   • What skills did this activity help you develop?
   • What did you find easy? What was hard?
   • How well did your group work together?
   • How do you think the SCAMPER technique could be applied to your Future City Project?